

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff Regnart, Director*



---

Contact:  
Jeff Estensen, Area Management Biologist  
Dayna Green, Asst. Area Management Biologist  
Phone: (907) 949-1320  
Fax: (907) 949-1830

Lower Yukon Area Office  
P.O. Box 127  
Emmonak, Alaska 99581  
Date Issued: 9/4/12  
Time: 4:00 p.m.

#### **2012 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 45**

#### **Fall Update # 7, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery**

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

#### **Fall Season Assessment**

The cumulative fall chum salmon total run size through September 3, based on run reconstruction, is approximately 946,209 fish. This is above the historical median of 623,762 fish for that date. The projected 2012 fall chum salmon run size is ranging between 950,000 and 1.0 million fish.

Five pulses of fall chum entered Yukon River in 2012. The first pulse of fall chum salmon entered the lower Yukon River on July 17 and was estimated to be 122,000 fish in size. Three additional pulses entered the lower Yukon River on July 25, July 31, and August 4 and were estimated to be 142,000, 35,500, and 43,000 fish in size. The fifth and largest pulse this season entered the river on August 16 and was estimated to be 212,000 fish in size.

Coho salmon passage peaked between August 19 and 23 and was estimated to be 65,000 fish in those five days. The cumulative passage by the Pilot Station sonar project through September 3, based on run reconstruction, is approximately 140,646 fish, which is below the historical median of 152,764 fish for that date.

#### ***Lower Yukon River Cooperative Drift Test Fishing*** – YDFDA, ADF&G

ADF&G ceased conducting test fish drifts on August 28. YDFDA is continuing the drift project through September 15.

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through September 3 was 1,989, which is above the historical median of 1,150 for that date. The cumulative CPUE through September 3 for coho salmon was 339, which is below the historical median of 382 for that date.

***Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing*** - Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council and BSFA

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through September 3 is 1,094, which is below the historical median of 1,890 for that date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon through September 3 is 594, which is below the historical median of 980 for that date.

***Pilot Station Sonar Project*** - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 3 is approximately 671,226 fish, which is above the median passage of 594,060 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through September 3 is approximately 90,576 fish, which is below the median passage of 128,178 fish for that date.

***Rapids Test Fish Wheel Project*** - Zuray

The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE through September 3 is approximately 12,437 fish, which is below the historical median of 17,581 fish for that date. The cumulative CPUE based on adjusted water level is slightly above the historical median for that date.

***Chandalar Sonar Project*** - USFWS

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 3 is approximately 72,744 fish, which is above the average passage of 48,352 fish for that date.

***Sheenjek Sonar Project*** - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 3 is approximately 22,956 fish, which is above the average passage of 15,807 fish for that date.

***Tanana Test Fish Wheel Project*** - Moore

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 2 is approximately 5,690 fish, which is above the average of 2,017 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through September 2 is 741 fish, which is above the average of 177 fish for that date. The test fish wheel was not in operation from August 24 through August 28 because of mud flows at the site. Fish passage for those days has been estimated through interpolation.

***Eagle Sonar Project*** - ADF&G & DFO

The preliminary transition date between Chinook to fall chum salmon runs was August 23. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through September 3 is 9,784 fish, which is above the average passage of 6,442 fish for that date.

***Stock Identification***

Fall chum salmon genetic samples processed from August 11 through August 22 (pulse 5) passage past Pilot Station sonar indicate that stocks represent approximately 42%, 32%, and 25% for Tanana, Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek), and Mainstem Canada respectively. These proportions are above average for Tanana and Border/US and slightly below average for Mainstem Canada based on the 2004-2011 dataset.

### **Age Composition**

The fall chum salmon age composition from the 6" LYTF drift nets through August 28 was 0.8% age-3, 77.9% age-4, 18.4% age-5, and 2.9% age-6 fish. The average age-4 fish is 66.0% for this date and average age-5 fish 31.5%. The sample size was 1,069 fish for ages and 1,086 for gender. Females contributed 55.0% to the samples, which is below the average of 58.0%.

The combined fall chum salmon age composition from commercial harvest periods in District 1 (through August 27) was 81.1% age-4, 16.4% age-5, and 1.8% age-6 fish. The sample size was 950 fish for ages and 959 for gender. The proportion of females in the commercial catch samples was 53.7%.

### **Fall Season Management**

In accordance with the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, a total run ranging from 900,000 to 1 million fish is adequate for escapement needs, full subsistence opportunity, and has a surplus available for other uses. Subsistence fishing is open 7 days per week in all mainstem districts (Districts 1-5).

### ***Fall Commercial Salmon Fishing***

Through September 4, thirteen fall commercial fishing periods have been announced in District Y-1, eleven periods in District Y-2, five periods in Subdistrict 4-A, four period in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and 2 periods in District 6. Additional commercial fishing periods will be dependent upon inseason run strength assessment and market interest.

#### Preliminary harvest information for District Y-1:

Period #13: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 12 hours (10:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 30), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (1:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 20).  
3,034 fall chum/20,238 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 2,494 coho/15,980 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative harvest for Y-1 through September 3 is 139,236 fall chum and 39,638 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 71 fish.

#### Preliminary harvest information for District Y-2:

Period #10: District Y-2, 9 hours (12:00 noon until 9:00 p.m. August 29).  
2,666 fall chum/17,892 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 3,534 coho/22,264 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #11: District Y-2, 4 hours (2:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. August 31)  
1,924 fall chum/12,648 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 1,762 coho/10,618 lbs. (\$1.25/lb.), incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative harvest for Y-2 through September 3 is 127,496 fall chum and 28,700 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 34 fish.

Preliminary harvest information for Subdistrict 4-A:

Period #4: Subdistrict 4-A, 144 hours (6:00 p.m. August 27 until 6:00 p.m. September 2).  
403 fall chum, 0 coho, incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative Subdistrict 4-A commercial harvest through September 3 is 674 fall chum salmon and the incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Preliminary harvest information for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C:

Period #3: Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, 120 hours (6:00 p.m. August 28 until 6:00 p.m. September 2). Zero fall chum, 0 coho, incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative commercial harvest for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C through August 28 remains 1,484 fall chum salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 0.

Preliminary harvest information for District 6:

Period #1: District 6, 42 hours (6:00 p.m. August 31 until 12:00 noon September 2).  
183 fall chum, 0 coho, incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #2: District 6, 42 hours (6:00 p.m. September 3 until 12:00 noon September 5).  
Period is announced no harvest information is available at this time.

***Subsistence Salmon Fishing***

Coastal District: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Districts 1, 2, 3: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

The Innoko River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 4: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller. Use of drift gillnets to harvest fall chum salmon is allowed in that portion of Subdistrict 4-A from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point during open subsistence fishing periods.

Koyukuk River: Subsistence salmon fishing in the Koyukuk River is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 5-D: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of Wood River): This area includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana. Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays. In the Old Minto Area, subsistence fishing for salmon is open for one 5 day fishing period per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays.

Subdistricts 6-C (from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River): This area includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha. Personal use salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates are available 24 hours a day at (907) 949-1731 or 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the Emmonak ADF&G office at (907) 949-1320 or the Fairbanks ADF&G office at (907) 459-7274. The Emmonak ADF&G office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

-end-